

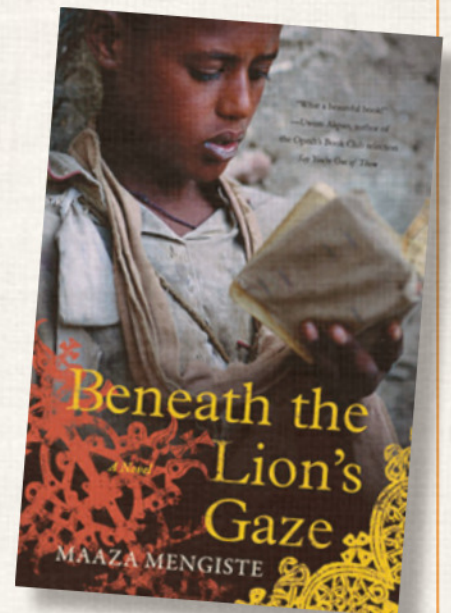


**EDUCATE GIRLS,** *change the world*

**10x10 BOOK CLUB TOOLKIT**

**BENEATH THE LION'S GAZE**

*by Maaza Mengiste*



# WELCOME

## *to the 10x10 book club!*

We are so happy you have chosen the work of author Maaza Mengiste! Joining the 10x10 Book Club and reading Maaza Mengiste's *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* is a wonderful introduction to our project and to the history of Ethiopia.

Maaza is writing the story of 10x10's Ethiopian girl for the upcoming film that is the centerpiece of our global action campaign: **10x10: Educate Girls, Change the World**. The film shares the stories of 10 remarkable girls from 10 developing countries, with each story written by an acclaimed author with important ties to that country. While each story is unique in theme and style, collectively they capture what it is like for girls to navigate adolescence in today's developing world.

10x10 is a campaign for girls' education that puts powerful stories into the hands of individuals and organizations that are committed to improving the lives of girls around the world. Educating and empowering girls is one of the most powerful and effective ways to break the cycle of poverty for families, communities, and entire countries. 10x10 brings together global nonprofit organizations, corporations, policy leaders, and individuals like you to support girls all over the world.

You are an important part of this campaign, and 10x10 is committed to giving you tangible actions that you can take every day to educate and empower girls to break the cycle of poverty!

In this kit, you'll find tools to enhance your discussion of *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, including a biography of Maaza Mengiste, a Q&A with the author, and discussion questions. We've also included an overview of Ethiopia, a list of additional resources, and even recipes and a music playlist to help create a full sensory experience.

Visit [10x10act.org](http://10x10act.org) to learn more about our campaign and the actions you can take through our partners, as well as updates from the field, photos of our girls, videos, and more! Enjoy!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Welcome	18	Ethiopian Menu
3	Hosting Your Book Club	21	Ethiopian Music Playlist
4	Maaza Mengiste Biography	22	More Info: Maaza Mengiste
5	Q&A with Maaza Mengiste	23	More Info: articles, policy briefs, videos and films, and books
12	Discussion Questions for <i>Beneath the Lion's Gaze</i>		
14	Country Report		
15	Ethiopia: A Historical Overview		
16	Ethiopia Today		
	Introduction		
	Status of girls		
	Child marriage		
	Education in Ethiopia		



# HOSTING YOUR BOOK CLUB

## *tips and suggestions*

### PLANNING

- **Invite members at least three weeks in advance.** Tell members that if they purchase *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* through 10x10's website, part of their purchase will go to support 10x10.
- **Encourage members to read the whole book** and come prepared with a few points or questions to share.
- **For an interesting and fun spin on the food for your gathering, try the recipes in this kit** ([page 19](#)).

### HELPING DISCUSSION

- **Make use of the discussion questions that are a part of this kit** ([page 12](#)).
- **Choose one person in advance to moderate the discussion.**
- **Talk about Maaza's biography and author Q&A.**

### TAKE ACTION

- **Conclude the discussion with a brief overview of 10x10's mission.** Then go online together to the [10x10 website](#) to support girls in Ethiopia. The following 10x10 partners work in Ethiopia: CARE, World Vision, United Nations Foundation/Girl Up, and Plan International. Donations to and actions involving these organizations will support girls in Ethiopia, in other 10x10 countries, and in other developing countries around the world.

### STAY IN TOUCH

- **Stay tuned for the next 10x10 Book Club selection!**
- **We want to know how your book club went.** Please tell us at [bookclub@10x10act.org](mailto:bookclub@10x10act.org).
- **We're also available to answer any further questions.** And we'd love to know what additional material you would find helpful in this kit. Be sure to write us at [bookclub@10x10act.org](mailto:bookclub@10x10act.org).

*thank you!*



# MAAZA MENGISTE

## biography

Maaza Mengiste was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and graduated with an MFA in Creative Writing from New York University, where she teaches. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The New York Times*, *The Granta Anthology for the African Writer*, and *Lettre International*, to name a few. She has received fellowships from the Fulbright Commission, the Emily Harvey Foundation, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Prague Summer Program, and Yaddo.

Her debut novel, the critically acclaimed *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, has been translated into several languages and was on multiple "Best of 2010" lists, including *Publishers Weekly*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and Barnes & Noble. She was a Runner-up for the 2011 Dayton Literary Peace Prize, as well as a finalist for a Flaherty-Dunn First Novel Prize, NAACP Image Award, and Indies Choice Book of the Year Award in Adult Debut. She currently lives in New York with her husband.

Writing *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* helped Maaza realize not only the devastating effects of war and strife, but the capacity of so many to fight to maintain their dignity. Her research exposed her to stories of incredible heroism and bravery. She is prouder than ever to claim Ethiopia and Ethiopians as part of her history.

Maaza feels a particularly strong obligation to help children who have experienced some of the same fear, confusion, and isolation she once confronted. Her work with 10x10 feels like a culmination of so much, both creatively and personally. She is humbled and inspired to be part of this project and she hopes that in these 10 women and 10 girls, audiences will recognize themselves.



Photo Credit: Miriam Berkley

# Q&A

## with Maaza Mengiste

### *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*

An Interview with 10x10 Advisor/BookDragon Terry Hong  
April 2011

#### MAAZA MENGISTE'S

**VOICE**, delivered by telephone many thousands of miles away, sounds impossibly young and happy. She's easy to talk to, easy to laugh with. She's in Rome for another few months, enjoying the spring sun, sipping another cup of tea in a nearby café, and watching the many American tourists wandering by.

Her idyllic life for the moment seems at odds with her own early past – filled with uncertainty, inexplicable violence, and constant fear.

Born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Maaza was just 3 years old when the 1974 Ethiopian revolution broke out, ousting a 3,000-year-old monarchy and replacing it with the brutal Derg regime that destroyed hundreds of thousands of lives before its collapse in 1991. Maaza was too young to understand what was happening, but perceptive enough to retain shattering images of that horrific time that have stayed with her through the years. Decades later, Maaza pieced together those memories to write her award-winning, critically acclaimed debut novel, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, published in early 2010.

At the core of Maaza's searing work are one family's hellish experiences during the 1974 revolution. The family's patriarch – the good doctor Hailu – is a prominent, proud man highly trained to alleviate pain, cure illness, and save the dying. And yet he can do nothing for his beloved wife who lies in a hospital bed, shriveled, exhausted, and ready to pass on. Hailu's elder son Yonas gravely tries to hold his family together, but is himself helpless when his young daughter becomes seriously ill and his wife Sara is crushed by the fear of potential loss.

Unlike the controlled, watchful Yonas, Hailu's younger son Dawit is still idealistic, still fueled by a rash temper that once put a fellow student in the hospital when Dawit, too young to understand rape, witnessed that student committing a vicious crime against a family servant. Dawit is devoted to his dying mother, emotionally dependent on his sister-in-law Sara, and in love with a headstrong young woman. He looks on in anguish and disgust as the new regime claims his childhood best friend, who uses complicity as a way to escape his deprived past spent in a mud shack adjacent to the luxury of Hailu's two-story home.

The revolution shatters the family's lives: Hailu's humanity, Yonas' responsibility, Dawit's ideals will all be tested. As if working pieces of an intricate puzzle, Maaza presents an epic historical moment too few



Photo courtesy of Maaza Mengiste

(continued)

## Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued*

of us know of, laying the most atrocious acts next to radiantly tender moments and juxtaposing utter cowardice with utmost bravery. The result proves unforgettable.

Based on the strength of that single novel, Maaza was chosen by the 10x10 team to write the Ethiopian chapter of the 10x10 documentary film. Her enthusiasm about the project is palpable, and she admits she is most excited about connecting to the Ethiopian girls. Almost shyly, she reveals her own experiences when, at age 7, she left the comfort of her family to escape the growing danger of remaining in Ethiopia and traveled alone to the United States as a tiny refugee. For over a decade, she grew up in a group home run by a Christian couple in a small town in Colorado: “No one has ever heard of it; it’s on the border with Kansas,” she says. She remained there, living with a revolving group of other refugees, until she graduated high school and left for college.

Maaza softly admits to her isolated youth as “difficult, and I wouldn’t want to wish it on anyone.” She adds, “maybe that’s why I feel so connected to the plight of children.”

### So how did you get involved with 10x10? And what was your initial reaction to finding out about the project?

I first heard about 10x10 from my agent, who sent me an email saying “doesn’t this sound really cool?” Attached was [10x10’s film director] Richard’s [Robbins] email that he was trying to get in contact with me to explain what was going on with the project. Then two minutes later, I got another email from a good friend whose wife had gone to school with Richard! Both of those emails came in almost exactly at the same time. I couldn’t say ‘no’ since Richard came with a personal recommendation!

Since I had lived in Los Angeles, I was very familiar with how films work, the challenges involved in making a production happen. My first reaction was ‘this is a fantastic idea, but I wonder how long it’s going to take to get off the ground, especially with a recession going on.’ But then I read the information about the actual documentary, and I saw that it was already coming together, that so much of the work had already been done before even coming to the writers. In addition to being a good idea, it was also so well presented. I loved it!

I was really honored just to be considered, so when I first talked to [10x10 producer] Martha [Adams], I was waiting for her to say, ‘well, we’re considering you, and we’ll let you know’ ... but I was so happy when she said she actually wanted to work with me! It was a dream come true: I’ve always wanted to combine writing with social outreach!

### Now that the first scouting trip to Ethiopia was recently completed, you had to make the most difficult decision to choose “your” girl. How did you choose her, and what can you tell us about her?

After Richard’s first trip to Ethiopia, I was presented with four girls and their stories. Choosing was a really hard thing to do because as I kept looking at all the girls’ stories again and again, I felt so connected to each of them. But something



Photo courtesy of Maaza Mengiste

(continued)

## Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued*

about the girl I chose reminded me of the girls in my own family; there was something so familiar about her. She had this bit of shyness about her [with the 10x10 crew], and I could completely understand being a little girl, overwhelmed by people who speak a different language, with cameras constantly in your face, but she still responded so well. She was shy and sweet and giving all at same time. Plus she had the biggest smile.

### Let's talk about writing *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*... what prompted you to pick an era you were barely born in?

I was 3 ... which, yes, is "barely born" comparatively. I still have distinct memories of that period, of my early life in Ethiopia. I think adults dismiss what kids can understand, what kids pick up on; adults assume that kids don't remember, and even if they do, kids are young enough to move past these experiences.



Photo courtesy of Maaza Mengiste

But for me, I had this story from my early, early years in the back of my head. When I got older, I tried to do some research, to put those early stories in some sort of context, so I could understand those parts of my memory.

### You mentioned "specific memories"? What were they?

I remember a sense of fear that seemed to be everywhere in our house. I remember gunshots, of being afraid to play outside, of not knowing what might happen out there. I remember soldiers breaking into our house. I knew people who would suddenly be gone and no one told me anything more about them. The memories are all fragmented. They're a child's memories.

Living in the United States, and watching the country caught up in wars against Afghanistan, and Iraq, I recognize war. I see war is still going on one way or another somewhere. War is not just Ethiopian.

### So are you Tizita?

A little bit, yes. She saw what I saw. Initially with my book, Tizita was going to be the main character; the novel was originally going to be from the perspective of a child. But as I was writing, I realized I wanted the story to be much more than a child's story, so I switched the perspective to Hailu's, to an adult's.

### What was the research process like for *Gaze*? Did you rely on any of your family's stories?

One of best pieces of advice I received from other writers who had written historical stories was to write the story first, then do the research. So I just started creating this story about a family during that time of the revolution. In bits and pieces, I incorporated some of the stories I knew and had heard. I imagined what must have happened then.

After that, it was time to ask my family. That turned out to be really hard. My parents said they didn't remember. "How can you remember?" they asked. "You remember more than we do!" So I didn't get much out of my parents at all!

(continued)

## Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued*

For writers, I think your family is probably the worst resource, especially because they can say “no.” I was still a little kid to my parents, and they didn’t want to talk about what happened with a child. So I started asking other people. That time is so difficult for many. I had to be careful when and how I asked; I did more listening than asking direct questions.

I moved to other people in my circle, other Ethiopians. I never sat down with pen and paper as if I was doing an interview. I would maybe be at lunch or dinner with someone and she might say something about being in college during the revolution, and so I would ask a question, then something might come out. I might say something about not many people were able to stay in college during that time, that students were disappearing, and then I would wait before asking something later. I couldn’t ask a direct question because that would shake them up, especially if they had been through some of these things. I did a lot of waiting and listening. This is why the book took five years to write, and many more years before that were spent looking for information and trying to understand my memories.

After I talked to people, I went to books about the revolution. I was always looking for narratives. I looked up newspaper clippings, magazine articles. I started realizing that other countries had experienced these sort of revolutions; someone pointed me to the dirty wars in Argentina that were happening about the same time as Ethiopia’s revolution – the same stories of dictatorship, civilians disappearing or being killed.

I realized that I wasn’t telling just an Ethiopian story, but rather a human story about people in power gone really bad. Today’s events happening in Libya, in Tunisia – they’re all really an echo of what happened in Ethiopia.

### Has your family read the novel? What have been their reactions?

Yes, they’ve read it, and loved it. I didn’t know what they would think, what they would say. Most Ethiopian parents want their kids to be a doctor, and if that’s not possible, then please be an engineer, and if that’s not possible, then they will settle for you being a lawyer. Here I was a writer and that didn’t make any sense to them. They couldn’t understand why I spent all this time on writing when I could have just gone to medical school.

When the book came out, I finally had something tangible to show them. After my mother read it, we were in DC together, and she sat me down and said, “Now I can finally tell you about all these things that happened.” I was amazed at how much I remembered and got right! Some things were uncanny; things I thought I had made up, she told me, “no, that really happened.” Names and characters I thought I had made up turned out to be real. That was really interesting to sit there and realize how much I really did remember.



©Richard E. Robbins, Alex Dionne, 10x10act.org

(continued)



**Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued***

**Given your parents' reactions to not being that doctor, engineer, or even a lawyer, how DID you become a writer? Where did you find the courage to do something so unexpected?**

I don't know if it was courage, but a dogged belief that there was nothing else that I could really do. I wasn't very good at much else and writing was the one thing I could do well. I also loved it enough to continue working at it to get better. I wanted to give up so many times. There was a small voice inside my head asking me why, why this, why now, and it could be deafening. But I remember one night, riding the subway back to my apartment and the fear and questions coming back. As sure as anything I've ever heard, I felt another voice superimpose itself onto all those questions I had. Inside my head, I heard: you will not fail. It was just a simple thought but it was strong enough to slide in and push away the insecurities. That thought stayed with me and when the questions rose again, I held on to that and it sustained me.

**While you were writing *Gaze*, how did you live with all the horror? How did you keep the nightmares from taking over your life?**

That part was very hard. When I was really in the world of the book, I didn't realize what a dark place I was in until I stepped out of it. I used to sit and write in a café. But I would get so emotional and start crying. People really thought I was crazy, so then I had to write in private.

I think reading about what happens in war, about civil strife, makes you look differently at the world. Once I was done writing and realized this is where I've been all this time, I felt a heavy load come off my shoulders. I did realize that writing this book had taken a toll.

My husband tells me he wanted to propose while I was writing the book but he realized I couldn't do it, couldn't think about something like marriage then. He had to wait until I was done with where I was emotionally at that time. He knew I needed to stay in this place so I could keep relating to my characters. He knew a proposal then wouldn't make me happy!

**So now that you're married, is that why you're in Italy? Did you move to romantic Roma for love?**

Oh, no! My husband's in New York! He has an Italian name, but he's Peruvian!

This move is purely for my second book! I won a Fulbright to do research, so I'm here for nine months total. I'm half-way through, so I'll be back in New York in August (2011). My husband was here for one semester, but he had to go back. He'll visit, I'll visit; we'll make it work for the next few of months until I go back to New York for good.

**And the new book...?**

My new book is set in 1935 during fascism, when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia. During the Italo-Ethiopian War, Ethiopian women fought alongside the men. Italy would violate the Geneva Conventions by using mustard gas to destroy the morale of Ethiopian troops. As Mussolini developed closer



Photo courtesy of Maaza Mengiste

*(continued)*

**Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued***

ties with Hitler, he eventually instated racial segregation laws that were as strict as any that existed in Africa by a colonizing force. By 1938, he would enact laws that banned Italian Jews from all areas of Italian life, including the military. I think the entire world was changing during those early years of the 1930s and all that we know of what it means to be human and honorable would be challenged. Through this book, I consider the effects of fascism's propaganda machine, of how it portrayed the people of East Africa, and how those stereotypes still exist in Italy and the world. I keep hearing echoes of these stereotypes in the way that Iraqis and Afghans have been portrayed in films and the media. We see this extended to portrayals of Arabs in general. It has been fascinating to look at this war through a present-day context.

**How often do you go back to Ethiopia? Do you still have family there? What are your visits like? Does Ethiopia still feel like 'home'?**

The majority of my family is still there. I was back last year; on average, I go back every other year. It's nice. I love going back.

I think, though, the U.S. is 'home' – I've been living there for so long. These last few months that I've been in Rome, I feel I really am more American than I ever thought I was. But when I go to Ethiopia, I connect to something I never lost coming to America, even though I grew up in America. I feel very comfortable in Ethiopia.

If it's about the streets I know, how to get around, where to go, that's the U.S. But my heart... that's something I never found in the U.S.... my heart is in Ethiopia.

**Ethiopia seems to be growing as an adoption destination for many western/American families. Celebrities, of course, have added to that allure. What do you think about these growing transracial Ethiopian adoptions?**

Since my book came out, I have had adoptive parents email me telling me they want to give this book to their Ethiopian children. So I've had more personal contact with this idea that international adoption in Ethiopia is happening.

I met a couple in New York that was considering adoption, I've gotten to know others who have adopted, and they've all been kind and good people. But I've also heard horror stories that I'm sure will come out in the next few years.

The people I've met personally are wonderful, any child would be lucky to have them as parents. But I also wish that the Ethiopian government and adoption agencies would continue to look into what happens to these children after they're adopted. Even in the best-case scenarios, issues of race and identity will come up for these children. I only hope that adoptive parents address these issues directly, instead of feeling uncomfortable and hurt because this child



Photo courtesy of Maaza Mengiste

*(continued)*

## Q&A WITH MAAZA MENGISTE, *continued*

whom they love so much starts asking questions that make them feel like they're not a part of the same family. These are issues that need to be dealt with delicately. But parents must understand that these issues will come up, and they need to be ready.

### What will you tell your own hapa children about your home country?

I will tell them about their grandparents, and they will know them. And I hope they will know their great-grandparents, too. I do expect to take them back to Ethiopia, so they will know that part of where they come from. I want them to hear the stories of my parents and grandparents directly from family members. I want them to be proud of their history and to know that with their Peruvian blood, they are a product of two of the oldest cultures in the world.

My husband and I will go to Peru, as well, so the children will know that part of their history. They will see as much as they will hear about those countries. I think the experience is important. I know that while growing up in the U.S. my having the chance to go back to Ethiopia once in awhile made a really big difference.



©Richard E. Robbins, Alex Dionne, 10x10act.org



# DISCUSSION

## questions

- Before reading *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, what were some of your impressions of Ethiopia?
- Did your perceptions of Ethiopia change after reading this book? How?
- What did you know about Ethiopia's political history? And what do you know now?
- What did you relate to in the novel? What did you find familiar?
- What do you think is the significance of the title, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*?
- Although Hailu has been trained to heal and save lives, he makes a final, agonizing decision with the young prisoner who arrives at his hospital. Did he have any alternatives? What might you have done in his place?
- Hailu's wife, Selam, is exhausted and ready to die. Why? Do you think she has any idea what lies ahead for her family?
- Yonas and Dawit, two brothers born of the same parents, could not be more different. Discuss their relationship to each other, and to their father and mother.
- Dawit has a special relationship to the women in his family: his mother, his older sister-in-law, his young niece. Where does that connection come from? Why are women so important in his life?
- Sara's story is told, hinted at, and revealed in small pieces throughout the novel. She makes the transformation from desperate mother to a brave, resilient resistance hero. What is her story? Who is she? How do you explain her sudden bravery?
- While the book focuses on the Hailu family, the author also creates highly memorable characters outside the family. One of the most tragic of those characters is Mickey. Betrayal seems to be his only means of escape from his life of deprivation. Did he have a choice? How else could he have lived his life?
- In spite of the many things that Hailu and his family do for Mickey and his mother, he does not send Mickey on to college. Why? How might college have changed Mickey's life, or even the course of events for the family during the revolution?

(continued)

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**, *continued*

- Emama Seble, dressed in black even 10 years after her husband's death, proves to be an extremely important character in the story. What function does she serve?
- How did you feel about Emperor Haile Selassie's dreamlike appearances in the novel?
- Is *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* strictly an Ethiopian story? If you changed the names and dates, could it also be any country's war story?



# ETHIOPIA

## country report

**Population:** 90,873,739 (July 2011 estimate via CIA)  
**Capital and largest city:** Addis Ababa  
**Official language:** Amharic  
**Government:** Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE)  
**Currency:** Birr (1 US\$ = 18.08 birr (ETB) in October 2011)  
**GDP per capita:** US \$1,000  
**Drives on the:** Right  
**Cambodia's full name:** Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

### ETHIOPIA BACKGROUND *from World Vision*

Ethiopia is home to a remarkable mosaic of peoples, languages, and cultures, punctuated by varied landscapes. The population is overwhelmingly rural, with the highest densities in a region called the central highlands. The effects of a severe macroeconomic imbalance, civil war, a social crisis involving millions of displaced persons, and a succession of devastating famines began to manifest themselves in the early 1980s. Four major famines occurred during that decade, killing approximately 2 million people. Today, a high level of food insecurity still exists due to drought, environmental degradation, and ongoing flooding. More than 38% of Ethiopians live below the poverty line, and 23% percent live on less than a dollar a day. The country ranks in the bottom 7% globally in annual per capita income and almost two-thirds of its people are illiterate.

### GENERAL FACTS ABOUT ETHIOPIA *from UNICEF*

- Ethiopia ranks 30th in the world in under-5 mortality rate.
- Ethiopia has the largest HIV/AIDS infected population in the world. An estimated 2.3 million Ethiopians are infected with HIV, and close to 1.2 million are HIV/AIDS orphans.
- Children are victims of harmful practices such as circumcision, abduction and early marriage, physical punishment, and labor exploitation.
- Access to education and educational materials in Ethiopia is generally rare.
- Access to clean water and sanitation facilities is inadequate.
- Malnutrition affects a large portion of the population, children in particular.
- Children in Ethiopia die from childhood diseases that could easily be prevented through immunization and basic health services.

### EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA *from UNICEF*

- Approximately 36.6% of primary school-age children are not enrolled in primary schools, and about 72% of school-age children have no access to formal education.
- More than 60% of primary school children do not get the chance to continue to grade 5. The drop out rates for girls are even higher than that of boys.
- Nearly 4.9 million adolescents aged 15-18, of which 2.4 million are girls, are not enrolled in school due to various economic and social reasons.
- Ethiopia's streets are home to 150,000-200,000 children, with an additional one million children vulnerable or at risk of ending up on the streets. Girls who work and live in the streets face sexual abuse by adults, rape, unwanted pregnancy, and early motherhood sometimes as young as 12. These girls are likely to join the ranks of child prostitutes or street mothers and continue the vicious cycle of street life. Inevitably, these child prostitutes are at high risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS. Addis Ababa alone has an estimated 10,000 street mothers.

# ETHIOPIA

## *a historical overview*

In addition to its ancient status as the “Cradle of Humanity,” Ethiopia is Africa’s oldest independent country and host of the African Union. The Ethiopian Empire, founded in the 12th century by Menelik I, remained in power until 1974. This Empire established a deep legacy of ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity, which, in conjunction with stark environmental factors, continues to influence the politics and society of Ethiopia today. Landlocked and a predominately agrarian society with 80% of the population working in agriculture, the country’s landscape and climate are particularly conducive to severe droughts and desertification.

In 1930, Emperor Haile Selassie took the throne as the last ruling monarch of Ethiopia. Selassie’s leadership was unique in Africa during the 20th century, as Ethiopia maintained relative freedom from colonial rule, excluding a brief period of Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941. A countrywide famine which began in 1972 killed thousands of Ethiopians while significantly destabilizing the Empire and Selassie’s political support; Selassie was ousted in 1974. A Soviet-backed Marxist junta called the Derg, meaning “council,” took advantage of media outlets to publicly criticize Selassie’s leadership. After broadcasting striking images of starvation in stark juxtaposition to clips of sumptuous palace banquets, the Derg created a narrative of excess and corruption within the monarchy and gained support for immediate political change.

Shortly thereafter, a new socialist government under the leadership of Mengistu Haile Mariam, replaced the monarchy forming the People’s Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Mengistu’s regime immediately nationalized Ethiopia’s industries and institutions, stripped the Ethiopian Church and elite of their previous wealth, and undermined the momentum of the Ethiopian economy. During this time, Ethiopia continued to suffer from severe famines, killing an estimated 1 million people, and further degrading the economy. A 30-year civil war between the government and rebel forces ensued, leading to the overthrow of Mengistu’s socialist regime by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in 1991. The coalition government established the current Ethiopian constitution in 1994, which divided the country into nine ethnically-based regions, and instituted the first multilateral elections in 1995. Although mass protests followed the 2005 parliamentary elections, Ethiopia remains under the guidance of a parliamentary democracy.



# ETHIOPIA *today*

## INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia remains a tightly woven tapestry of diverse people, traditions, and beliefs. Addis Ababa flourishes as a cultural and culinary center of East Africa, and Ethiopia plays a central role in African policy as the host to the African Union headquarters. Politically, however, despite operating within a “federal parliamentary republic,” Ethiopia seems to have devolved into a de-facto one-party state, with restrictions against opposition activities, media, and civil society.

Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with 81% of its population living on less than \$2 per day. The country continues to face severe development challenges, and life expectancy has fallen to 42 years, owing to recurrent food shortages, ongoing political clashes, and a growing HIV epidemic. While the government and many NGOs work to address these challenges, the support of the international community is crucial to the country’s future development.



©Richard E. Robbins, Alex Dionne, 10x10act.org



©Alex Dionne; 10x10act.org

## STATUS OF GIRLS

According to the Ethiopian government, girls and women are awarded all civil liberties, including legal rights, voting rights, and equal protection under the law. However, these laws are loosely enforced and, in many areas of Ethiopia, particularly rural regions where deeply rooted traditions dictate social norms, girls are not given rights or recognition equal to boys.

Such gender gaps perpetuate further disparity since, without education, women lack access to economic or political opportunities. Women are not typically

viewed as valuable for anything other than marriage, child bearing, and household labor. In the face of severe poverty, families often deny daughters access to an education as it is not seen as a worthwhile investment.

## CHILD MARRIAGE

The legal age for marriage in Ethiopia is 18 for both males and females, and yet Ethiopia has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world. Nationwide, 19% of girls are married by the age of 15, and about half are married by the age of 18. In some regions, such as Amhara, child marriage is nearly universal.

*(continued)*





©Alex Dionne; 10x10act.org

This brief overview by the Population Council provides insight into the effects of child marriage:

[“Overview of Child Marriage.”](#)

## EDUCATION

Ethiopia has one of the lowest primary school enrollment rates and one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world. In 2002, Ethiopia’s adult literacy rate was 41.5% and its gross primary enrollment rate was 66%, significantly less than the average for low-income countries.

Child marriage, poverty, and discrimination account for considerably low rates of school attendance amongst girls. Girls who are married are rarely allowed to continue their education, while uneducated girls are more likely to be married younger since they do not promise economic benefits to their families and thus remain dependent upon their fathers or husbands. In fact, 80% of married girls have received no education, and only 3% of married girls aged 15-19 are in school. (Population Council)

The quality and accessibility of education is especially low in rural areas of Ethiopia, where, according to the Ministry of Education, “a quarter of the population lives four or more kilometers from the nearest primary school – implying a very high cost in terms of time, transport, energy, and safety for children to attend school on a regular basis.”



©Richard E. Robbins, Alex Dionne, 10x10act.org



©Richard E. Robbins, Alex Dionne, 10x10act.org

## FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

Perezniето, Paola, and Jones, Nicola. [“Educational Choices in Ethiopia: What determines whether young children go to school?”](#)

Department for International Development, Home, Projects and Programmes, Document Record. Accessed on July 19, 2011.

Population Council. [“Child Marriage Briefing: Ethiopia.”](#) Accessed on July 19, 2011.

Social Institutions & Gender Index. [“Gender Equality and Social Institutions in Ethiopia.”](#) Home, Country, Ethiopia. Accessed on July 19, 2011.

# ETHIOPIA

## menu

### Doro Wett

*Doro Wett*, a spiced chicken stew, is an iconic Ethiopian dish that is especially popular during the Muslim holiday, Ramadan. Acclaimed chef Marcus Samuelsson, who was born in Ethiopia, chronicles his return to Africa in the cookbook, *The Soul of a New Cuisine*, in the form of culinary discoveries he made along the way. We've included Chef Samuelsson's recipe for *Doro Wett* here.

### Injera

Traditionally, *wetts* are eaten with *injera*, a spongy flat bread made from the millet-like grain known as teff. The recipe below does not use teff flour, but is a close approximation of the traditional preparation.

### Spiced Butter

The mixture known as *nit'ir qibe*, which begins with clarified butter, is kept handy in most Ethiopian kitchens to add flavor to meat and vegetable stews. In fact, virtually no meal in Ethiopia is made without *nit'ir qibe*, which gives the cooking its beautifully layered signature flavors. It also has a much longer shelf life than regular butter. The butter will solidify when chilled, but it will become liquid again when left at room temperature.

### Berberere

In Ethiopia, the preparation of *berbere* takes days – chilies are dried in the sun for three days, then ground in a mortar and pestle, mixed with ground spices, and set in the sun to dry again – and it is usually made in huge amounts.

Each Ethiopian family has its own recipe for this universal seasoning, with varying degrees of heat and spiciness. Traditionally, *berbere* is used to flavor Ethiopian stews, but it can also be used as a rub for beef and lamb.

# RECIPES

## Doro Wett

- 2 medium red onions, diced
- Salt
- 1/4 cup **Spiced Butter** (or 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, divided)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom, preferably freshly ground
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 cloves
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- One 1 1/2-inch piece ginger, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon **Berberere** or chili powder
- 2 1/2 cups chicken stock, divided
- One 4-to 5-pound chicken, cut into 10 pieces, wings reserved for another use
- 1/4 cup dry red wine
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled

## Instructions

Combine the onions, a pinch of salt, and half of the spiced butter in a Dutch oven or other large deep pot over low heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are golden, about 15 minutes. Add the remaining butter, the cardamom, black pepper, cloves, garlic, ginger, and *berbere* (or chili powder) and cook until the onions soften and take on the color of the spices, about 10 minutes.

Add 2 cups of the chicken stock and the chicken legs and thighs, bring to simmer, and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the remaining 1/2 cup chicken stock and the wine, bring back to a simmer, and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the chicken breasts and simmer for 20 minutes.

Gently stir in the lime juice and eggs and simmer for another 5 minutes. The sauce will be loose and soupy. Season with salt to taste.

*Number of servings: 6*

## Spiced Butter

- 1 pound unsalted butter
- 1/2 medium red onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- One 3-inch piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon cardamom seeds
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 8 basil leaves

## Instructions

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan over low heat, stirring frequently. As foam rises to the top, skim and discard it. Continue cooking, without letting the butter brown, until no more foam appears. Add the onion, garlic, ginger, fenugreek, cumin, cardamom, oregano, turmeric, and basil, and continue cooking for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and let stand until the spices settle. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve before using. Store in the refrigerator in a tightly covered container for up to 3 weeks.

*Yield: Makes 1 1/2 cups*

## RECIPES, *continued*

### Berberé

- 1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds
- 1/2 cup ground dried Serrano chilies or other ground dried chilies
- 1/2 cup paprika
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom, preferably freshly ground
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice

### Instructions

Finely grind the fenugreek seeds with a mortar and pestle or in an electric spice or coffee grinder. Stir together with the remaining ingredients in a small bowl until well combined.

### Injera

- 3 cups self-rising flour
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1 tablespoon active dry yeast
- 3 1/2 cups warm water

### Instructions

(Prep time: 1 1/2 hrs; Total time: 1 3/4 hrs)

Mix everything together to form a batter. Let set in large bowl, covered, an hour or longer, until batter rises and becomes stretchy. It can sit as long as 3-6 hours. When ready, stir batter if liquid has settled on bottom. Whip in blender, 2 cups of batter at a time, thinning it with 1/2 - 3/4 cup water. Batter will be quite thin. Cook in nonstick frying pan WITHOUT OIL over medium or medium-high heat. For each *injera*, use: 1/2 cup batter for a 12-inch pan or 1/3 cup batter for a 10-inch pan. Pour batter in heated pan and quickly swirl pan to spread batter as thinly as possible. Batter should be no thicker than 1/8 inch. DO NOT turn over. *Injera* does not easily stick or burn. *Injera* is cooked through when bubbles appear all over the top. Lay each *injera* on a clean towel for a minute or two, then stack in covered dish to keep warm. Finished *injera* will be thicker than a crepe, but thinner than a pancake.

*Number of servings: 15-20*



# ETHIOPIA

## *music playlist chart*

### LISTEN TO ETHIOPIAN PLAYLISTS

[AddisZefen](#)

[ethiopiannow](#)

SONG	ARTIST	ALBUM
"I Love Jah"	The Ethiopians	<i>Slave Call</i>
"Etitite!"	Aster	<i>Aster Aweke</i>
"Semena-Work"	Gigi	<i>Gold &amp; Wax</i> <i>The Ethiopian Millenium Collection - Dance</i>

All songs are available on iTunes.



# MORE INFO

## Maaza Mengiste

Maaza's website [www.maazamengiste.com](http://www.maazamengiste.com)

Maaza on [NPR](#)

[New York magazine](#) feature on Maaza

[New York Times](#) book review of *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*

[BookDragon](#) review of *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*

### PRAISE FOR *BENEATH THE LION'S GAZE*

"What a beautiful book! After a few chapters I felt I was a member of this family, a citizen of Ethiopia. Maaza Mengiste is talented and bold and fresh. Already, I'm looking forward to her next book."

- Uwem Akpan, author of *Say You're One of Them* (Oprah's Book Club)

"Powerful, painful and wildly ambitious."

- *USAToday*

"*Beneath the Lion's Gaze* melds personal detail and... history in the manner of *The Last King of Scotland* and *The Kite Runner*, but it's Mengiste's lush yet economical writing that really sets it apart."

- *New York Magazine*

"Intelligent and moving, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze* provides a window into a complex and ancient country."

- *Christian Science Monitor*

"Mengiste is as adept at crafting emotionally delicate moments as she is deft at portraying the tense and grim historical material, while her judicious sprinkling of lyricism imbues this novel with a vivid atmosphere that is distinct without becoming overpowering. That the novel subjects the reader to the same feelings of hopelessness and despair that its characters grapple with is a grand testament to Mengiste's talent."

- *Publisher's Weekly* (starred review)

"Mengiste's social intelligence and historical research allow her to write compassionately about emotions denatured by brutal regime or calcified by conviction. But the real marvel of this tender novel is its coiled plotting, in which coincidence manages to evoke the colossal emotional toll of the revolution."

- *The New Yorker*



# MORE INFO

*articles, videos, policy briefs & more*

## ARTICLES ON ETHIOPIA

[Human Planet Explorer: Ethiopia](#) [Browse photos, videos, and audio from past BBC programs that were filmed in Ethiopia]

[Ethiopian Child Brides Give Themselves to Tradition](#)

[Child Brides: Too Young to Wed](#) [National Geographic special report on multiple countries, including Ethiopia]

## VIDEOS ON ETHIOPIA

10x10: [Melka's Story](#)

UNICEF Report: [In Ethiopia, better education for a better...](#)

UNICEF: [In Ethiopia, schools empty as effects of drought](#)

UNICEF: [Schools for Africa - Ethiopia](#)

## POLICY BRIEFS

Population Council, Child Marriage Briefing: Ethiopia [view brief](#)

Human Rights Watch, Development without Freedom: How Aid Underwrites Repression in Ethiopia [view brief](#)

DFID, Young Lives Policy Brief 2, Educational Choices in Ethiopia [view brief](#)

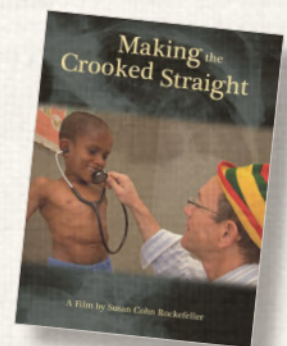
## FILMS ABOUT ETHIOPIA

*Making the Crooked Straight* (2008)

website: [makingthecrookedstraight.org](http://makingthecrookedstraight.org) | purchase & download: [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

trailer: [youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

Born in Long Island, New York and educated at John Hopkins, Dr. Rick Hodes has dedicated his life to helping heal the sick and poor of Ethiopia over the past 20 years. Driven by his devotion to Orthodox Judaism and its belief that "He who saves one life, saves an entire world," Hodes provides these patients with hospital care – arranges for complex overseas surgeries – often paying for these out of his own pocket – and has, thus far, fostered 17 children in



(continued)

order to provide them with not only proper medical care but a home and an education. Often compared with Albert Schweitzer and Mother Teresa, Hodes believes the only way to change the world is to be the change. *Making the Crooked Straight* explores this remarkable man's work in Ethiopia, his highly original family life, and the spirituality that has guided his choices and sacrifices.

### *Teza* (2008)

website: [tezathemovie.com](http://tezathemovie.com) | trailer: [youtube.com](http://youtube.com)

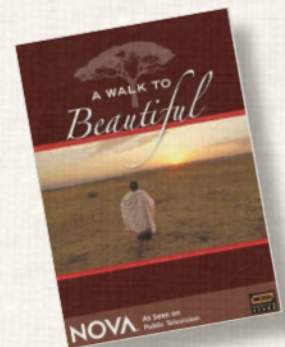
In the latest film from acclaimed Ethiopian American director Haile Gerima (*Sankofa*), Ethiopian intellectual Anberber returns to his native country during the repressive totalitarian regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, and the recognition of his own displacement and powerlessness at the dissolution of his people's humanity and social values. After several years spent studying medicine in Germany, he finds the country of his youth replaced by turmoil. His dream of using his craft to improve the health of Ethiopians is squashed by a military junta that uses scientists for its own political ends. Seeking the comfort of his countryside home, Anberber finds no refuge from violence. The solace that the memories of his youth provide is quickly replaced by the competing forces of military and rebelling factions. Anberber needs to decide whether he wants to bear the strain or piece together a life from the fragments that lie around him.



### *A Walk to Beautiful* (2007)

website: [walktobeautiful.com](http://walktobeautiful.com) | trailer: [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) | purchase: [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

This award-winning feature-length documentary tells the stories of five Ethiopian women who suffer from devastating childbirth injuries and embark on a journey to reclaim their lost dignity. Rejected by their husbands and ostracized by their communities, these women are left to spend the rest of their lives in loneliness and shame. They make the choice to take the long and arduous journey to the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in search of a cure and a new life.



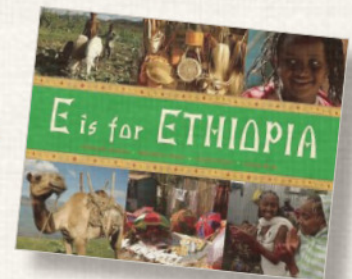
## CHILDREN'S BOOKS

### *E Is for Ethiopia*

by Ashenafi Gudeta, Ataklti Mulu, Betelhem Abate, and Dama Boru

purchase: [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

*E is for Ethiopia* is part of the wide-ranging photographic World Alphabet series. The text and photographs in this book are by a group of young photographers in Ethiopia, and showcases the country's rich history as one of the oldest civilizations in the world.



(continued)

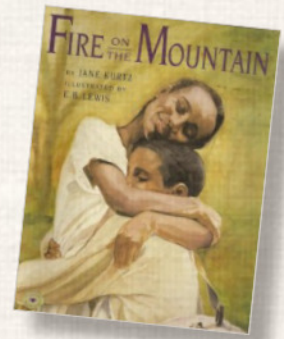


***Fire on the Mountain***

by Jane Kurtz, illustrated by E.B. Lewis

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

A newly illustrated version of a well-known Ethiopian folktale about a clever shepherd boy and his sister. In exchange for a bag of money and four cows, Alemayu accepts a challenge from his sister's boastful, rich employer to spend the night alone on a mountain with minimal clothing and without a fire. He survives the bitterly cold night by concentrating on a shepherd's fire across the way on another mountain. The haughty man refuses to pay him, stating that looking at someone else's fire is the same as building one's own—until the siblings devise a plan that allows the man to see the foolishness of his reasoning.

**MIDDLE GRADE/YOUNG ADULT BOOKS*****Cry of the Giraffe***

by Judie Oron

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) | review: [BookDragon](#)

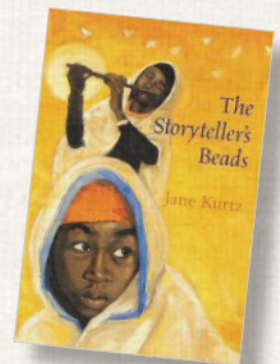
Fleeing rebel violence compounded by religious persecution during Mengistu's reign in Ethiopia, Wuditu and her family secretly escape their native village and head toward a refugee camp in the Sudan, following promises that they will be rescued and evacuated to Jerusalem. For centuries, Ethiopian Jews remained outcasts in their own homeland. One dark night in 1989 in the refugee camp, Wuditu, age 13, and her sister Lewteh, 10, are violently expelled from the camp and forced to walk back to Ethiopia, where they thankfully find temporary shelter with an elderly couple. Wuditu makes the difficult decision to seek help alone in order to save her sister and herself, hoping to reunite them both with their family. Her odyssey of deprivation, violence, prostitution, and slavery is wrenching, and yet somehow, she never gives up her dream of safety, family, and salvation in a homeland she has only imagined.

***The Storyteller's Beads***

by Jane Kurtz

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) | review: [BookDragon](#)

Sahay and her uncle, the last surviving members of their family, are on the run, their lives destroyed by the Red Terror – the sweeping violence led by Mengistu Haile Mariam following the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie. Their only hope for a future lies in another country, in the refugee camps in bordering Sudan. Along the frightening journey, Sahay and her uncle are joined by others on the run, including a young blind girl, Rahel, and her older brother. The siblings are alone, forced to abandon their parents and elderly grandmother; they are *falashas*, a derogatory term used for Ethiopian Jews who are long persecuted pariahs in their own country. Rahel and her brother hope to make *aliyah*, to journey to their spiritual home of Israel – somewhere they've never been. Sahay, long taught by misinformed adults to fear and hate the *falasha*, is surprised by Rahel and her brother's kindness during their grueling escape. Her wariness dissipates as the two girls are thrown together, and their only chance of survival depends on helping one another.



(continued)

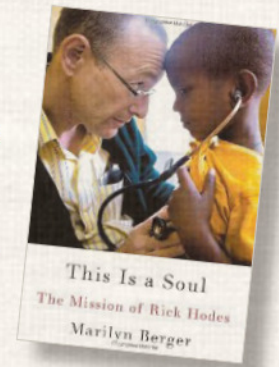
## ADULT NON-FICTION BOOKS

### *This Is a Soul: The Mission of Rick Hodes*

by Marilyn Berger

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Dr. Rick Hodes arrived in Africa more than two decades ago to help the victims of a famine, but he never expected to call this extremely poor continent his home. Twenty-eight years later, he is still there. This is the remarkable story of Rick Hodes's journey from suburban America to Mother Teresa's clinic in Addis Ababa. When he heard about famine in Africa, he went, and when genocide convulsed Rwanda, he went into the refugee camps to minister to the victims. At Mother Teresa's mission in Addis Ababa, Dr. Hodes found his calling when he began caring for the sickest children in one of the world's poorest countries. But he did more than that – he began taking them into his home and officially adopted five of them. *This Is a Soul* is not just a story of the savior and the saved, it is a celebration of love and wisdom, and an exploration of how charity and devotion can actually change lives in an overcrowded, unjust, and often harsh world.

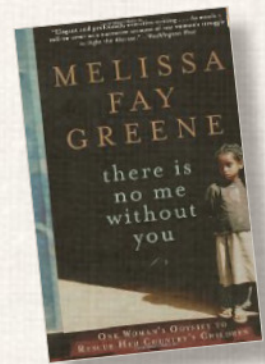


### *There Is No Me Without You: One Woman's Odyssey to Rescue Her Country's Children*

by Melissa Fay Greene

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) | review: [BookDragon](https://www.bookdragon.com)

The jarring HIV/AIDS statistics alone are unfathomable – and Greene is certainly thorough in providing well-researched, vigilantly documented numbers. What is even more shocking, however, is how the history of AIDS in Africa is so intertwined with the so-called developed West and its irresponsible behaviors in the name of humane aid. Children are, not surprisingly, the most tragic victims: in 2005, Ethiopia's population of 1,563,000 AIDS orphans was the second highest concentration in the entire world. Amidst the pandemic, one woman, Haregewoin Teferra, refused to abandon the children. When she lost her husband far too early, she mourned. When she lost her eldest daughter, Haregewoin lost her own will to live. What brought Haregewoin back to life were children. As the AIDS pandemic claimed countless lives, the orphaned, abandoned, unwanted children had nowhere to go. Haregewoin became their last chance for survival. Greene captures Haregewoin's odyssey – interspersed with data, public policy, politics, and history – with eyes wide open. As inspiring and loving as Haregewoin was in her efforts to mother hundreds and hundreds of children, she was not a saint, or even faultless. She was extraordinarily heroic, but also deeply flawed... and yet she did perform more than a few miracles.



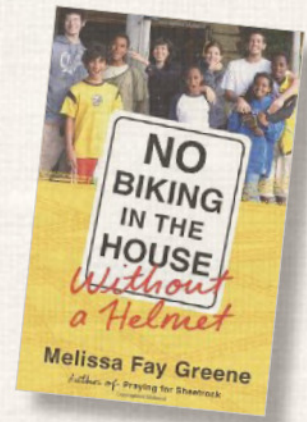
(continued)

***No Biking in the House Without a Helmet***

by Melissa Fay Greene

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) | review: [BookDragon](#)

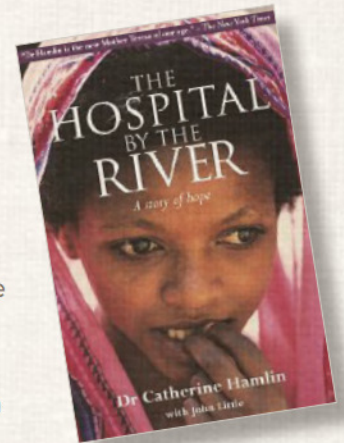
With four children quickly getting older, two-time National Book Award finalist Melissa Fay Greene and her attorney husband Don Samuel worried about becoming empty nesters far too soon. So, writes Greene, “When the clock started to run down on the home team, we brought in ringers. We figured out how to stay in the game.” First came Jesse from Bulgaria, followed by another four children – Helen, Sol, Daniel, and Yosef – all Ethiopian by birth. The ordeal to get these last four children out of their birthcountry is especially memorable. In spite of everyday surprises, Greene somehow keeps her sanity... long enough to write this unforgettable family adventure. Ready with the Band-Aid box in hand, Greene is a culturally sensitive, boldly humane, never-crushing antidote to this year’s Tiger Mother. Join the Greene/Samuel melee, filled with water balloons, newborn gerbils, dead chickens, spicy foods, baseball stats, frequent-flyer miles, endless extended family... and, most importantly, an unlimited supply of laughter and love..

***The Hospital by the River: A Story of Hope***

by Dr. Catherine Hamlin with John Little

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

The awe-inspiring story of the life and mission of Dr. Catherine Hamlin who, with her husband Reg, established what has been heralded as one of the most incredible medical programs in the modern world. The Hamlins, both Christians, dedicated their lives to women suffering the catastrophic effects of obstructed labor. The awful injuries that such labor produces are called fistulae, and until the Hamlins began their work in Ethiopia, fistula sufferers were neglected and forgotten – a vast group of women facing a lifetime of incapacity and degradation. Catherine and Reg, with their team of dedicated fistula surgeons, have successfully operated on over 25,000 women, and the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital has become a major teaching institutions for gynecologists from all over Ethiopia and the developing world.



(continued)

## ADULT FICTION BOOKS

### *Cutting for Stone*

by Abraham Verghese

purchase: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) | review: [BookDragon](#)

On September 20, 1954, conjoined twin sons violently enter the world in Missing Hospital's Operating Theater 3 in Addis Ababa. Born to an Indian nun who dies, and a British surgeon who vanishes in shocked stupor, they are named Marion (for the pioneering American gynecologist) and Shiva (who was "all but dead until [his adoptive mother-doctor] invoked Lord Shiva's name"). Now at 50, Marion Praise Stone examines his life: the twins' Ethiopian childhood intertwined with their nanny's daughter Genet, their cleaving when Marion is forced to flee their homeland, his training in a New York inner-city "Ellis Island hospital" (far removed from a more genteel "Mayflower hospital"), the shattering events that lead to reunion, and his ultimate trip back home. His telling repays a debt:

"What I owe Shiva most is this: to tell the story. It is one... which I had to piece together. Only the telling can heal the rift that separates my brother and me.... Where silk and steel fail, story must succeed. To begin at the beginning..." The result is, in a word, wondrous.

